(c) why the alignment proposed and marked in 1994, mostly through vacant lands are changed in 1997 and submitted for Government's approval rejecting the three other proposals ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) to (c) Land acquisition process along the approved alignment of Kochi-Madurai Highway of National Highway-49 has been initiated by the State Government. There was no alignment proposal of Greater Cochin Development Authority (GCDA) at the time of finalisation of the alignment of National Highway-49. The alignment was approved based on the detailed survey and investigation done by the State PWD taking into account the techno-economic aspects of the alternative proposals.

Development of Inland Waterways

2726. SHRI RAMACHANDRAIAH RUMANDLA : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government proposed to develop inland waterways in a big way to relieve pressure on the roads;

(b) if so, the details of plans of navigable waterways to be used as mode of transport; and

(c) the feasibility of developing Kakinada Chennai navigable project as mode of inland transport?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The National Transport Policy Committee has identified the following ten waterways of the country as having potential for declaration and development as national waterways :—

(i) The Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly river system
(ii) The Brahmaputra
(iii) The West Coast Canal
(iv) The Sunderbans
(v) The Godavari
(vi) The Krishna
(vii) The Mahanadi
(viii) The Narmada
(ix) The Mandovi, Zuar, rivers and Cumberjua Canal in Goa
(x) The Tapi.

Three waterways namely the Ganga, the Brahmaputra and the West Coast Canal have been declared as National waterways and are being developed by the Central Government by providing infrastructural facilities for shipping and navigation. Hydrographic surveys and Techno-economic studies have also been conducted on other waterways. Declaration of new waterways, as national waterways would depend on availability of funds.

(c) Techno-economic feasibility study has been conducted for development of canal system between Kakinada and Mercaunam integrated with Godavari and Krishna river system. The study has shown that the development of this waterway system is viable.

Declaration of Palakkad-Calicut Road as National Highway

2727. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to include the road from Palakkad to Calicut (via) Malappuram-Calicut Airport as National Highway;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of allocation of funds for this road in this Budget?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) to (c) The road from Palakkad to Calicut via Malappuram which provides a link to Calicut Airport with a length of 130 Kms. has already been declared as National Highway No. 213. The expenditure on any developmental work along this National Highway will be met out of the total allocation for National Highway (Original) works in Kerala.

Declaration of New National Highways in Punjab

2728. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA :

SARDAR GURCHARAN SINGH TOHRA :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether any proposal by Punjab Government to declare some State highways as National Highways is lying pending with Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons for the delay in taking a final decision?